

The Tragedy of Hamlet

It did me yeomans service; wilt thou know
Th' effect of what I wrote?

Hora. I good my Lord.

Ham. An earnest conjuration from the King,
As *England* was his faithfull tributary,
As love between them like the *Palme* might flourish,
As peace should still her wheaten garland weare,
And stand a *Comma* 'twene their amities,
And many such like, as sir of great charge,
That on the view and knowing of these contents,
Without debatement further more or lesse
He should those bearers put to sudden death,
Not shriving time allow'd.

Hora. How was this seal'd?

Ham. Why even in that was heaven ordinaunt:
I had my fathers signet in my purse,
Which was the modell of that *Danish* seale,
Folded the writ up in the forme of th' other,
Subscrib'd it, gave't thimpreffion, plac'd it safely,
The changling never known; now the next day
Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent
Thou know'st already.

Hor. So *Guyldenstern* and *Rosencrans* go to't.

Ha. They are not neare my conscience, their defeat
Does by their owne insinuation grow;
'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes
Between the passe and fell incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Hor. Why what a King is this!

Ham. Does it not, think you, stand me now upon?
He that hath kill'd my King, and whor'd my mother,
Popt in between th' election and my hopes,
Throwne out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cosenage, is't not perfect conscience?

Enter a Courtier.

Cour. Your Lordship is right welcome backe to *Denmarke*.

Ham. I humbly thanke you sir.
Doeft know this *Water-flye*?

Hora.

Prince of Denmarke.

Hora. No my good Lord.

Ham. Thy state is the more gracious; for 'tis a vice to know
him; he hath much land and fertill, let a beast be Lord of beasts,
and his crib shall stand at the Kings messe; 'tis a chough, but as I
say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Cour. Sweet Lord, if your Lordship were at leisure I should im-
part a thing to you from his Majesty.

Ham. I will receive it fir with all diligence of spirit; your bon-
net to his right use, 'tis for the head.

Cour. I thank your Lordship, 'tis very hor.

Ham. No beleeve me 'tis very cold, the wind is Northerly.

Cour. It is indifferent cold my Lord indeed.

Ham. But yet me thinks it is very foultry and hot, for my com-
plexion.

Cour. Exceedingly my Lord, it is very foultry, as 'twere I can-
not tell how: my Lord, his Majesty bad me signifie unto you, that
a has laid a great wager on your head, fir this is the matter.

Ham. I beseech you remember.

Cour. Nay good my Lord, for my ease in good faith. Sir here is
newly come to Court *Laertes*, beleeve mee an absolute Gentle-
man, full of most excellent differences, of very soft society, and
great shewing: indeed, to speake feelingly of him, he is the Card
or Kalendar of Gentry, for you shall finde in him the continent of
what part a Gentleman would see.

Ham. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in you, though I
know to divide him inventorially, would dizzie th' arithmetick of
memory, and yet but raw neither in respect of his quicke saile;
but in the verity of extolment, I take him to be soule of a great ar-
ticle, and his infusion of such dearth and rarenesse, as to make true
dition of him, his semblable is his mirrour, and who else would
trace him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Cour. Your Lordship speakes most infallibly of him.

Ham. The concernancy fir, why do we wrap the Gentleman in
our more rawer breath?

Cour. Sir.

Hora. Is't not possible to understand in another tongue, you
will doe't fir really.

Ham. What imports the nomination of this Gentleman?

Cour.